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Black Gold

University of Rhode Island

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BLACK GOLD submits



a proper

and

dignified

"good-bye"

BLACK



GOLD

Black Communications: Myth or Reality

"..We wish to plead our own cause. Too long have others spoken for us. Too long has the public been deceived by misrepresentations in things which concern us dearly..." "Freedom's Journal," 1827.

A Black radio station in R.I.?...unbelievable.
A Black community newspaper??...insane.
Or how about a black-oriented cable T.V. network in Providence??...that doesn't make sense either...it's impossible.
Or...is...it?

What is so "impossible" about Black communications? What is so "insane" about Black controlled media. What's so unbelievable about Black-owned frequencies?

A group of Rhode Island Black communicators not also see these ideas as possible, sane and believable but are working to make these dreams realities. They call themselves **BLACKS IN COMMUNICATIONS**.

They feel there is a need for balancing the communications scales in our small state because:

When a R.I. Black flicks on his T.V., he is reminded, daily, that white distortion is still a dismal and destructive device.

When a R.I. Black reads his daily paper he is reminded that presupposed white objectivity objects to Black intrusion or interjection.

When Rhode Island Blacks button their car radios they are reminded that radio air waves are over-ridden with too many non-identifiable fabrications.

In other words, there is virtually nothing for Blacks to see, hear or relate to when seeking informative, cultural, educational, entertaining outlets which are oriented, solely, for their needs. This is important.

Much time is spent before a television, or listening to a radio, or reading a daily paper. This is dangerous — if these sources are devoid of the blackness that is reflective of ourselves.

Are we so conditioned to receive white WPRO, JOURNAL, WJAR stimuli — that we cannot respond to what should naturally be?

BIC thinks this is not the case. You see, their rationale is this: control of mass media is essential...it means Black reality (the kind of reality that cannot be found in the white supervised media); it means Black wealth.

Not only would a community radio station (for example) provide insight and the proper sense of truth but it would mean money, jobs, and training for those brothers, sisters, who itch for the opportunity to communicate...to explain...to explore.

Let us not dismiss or forfeit this valuable tool of public expression simply because it has never been tried within our small perimeters. The time is now, the opportunity waiting.

BLACKS IN COMMUNICATIONS have found a new and precious obligation to fulfill...with their persistence will blossom a dimensional dynamism that will resound throughout the black community...it will be up to you, sister/brother, to listen.

Valerie J. Southern
Editor-In-Chief,
Black Gold

BLACK GOLD welcomes letters from the community. All letters must be signed and typed. BLACK GOLD reserves the right to edit letters solely for the sake of clarity. Write us — o.k.?

letter to the editor

Dear Val,

I had to write and tell you how glad I was to see Black Gold back in print. I knew that somehow you would find a way to continue with the paper. The layout, graphs, articles, and the quality in general were of the high standard I know you demand.

I would also like to commend the staff, because I know of the long hours and tiring work that must be put into the makings of the newspaper.

Providence, and the surrounding Black communities are in dire need of something like Black Gold, and I am glad you chose to create and continue with it.

All I can say is "keep on keeping on." I will try to contribute when I can.

Your comrade,
Cora A. Watkins

firefly in the rising sun,
your light is cold, bold,
and burns unseen
Thomas Nance

editorial box

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TODAY!!

The Cotillion by John O. Killens



Killens's book, although a light, easily digestible piece of fiction, tends to be a spontaneous reality to an unrealistic behavior standard. Killens, in *The Cotillion*, concentrates on and depicts the interactions between the black "bourgeoisie" and their less fortunate and culturally deprived black "brother." *Cotillion* deals basically in black lives, thoughts, and actions and reveals the raw motivations that encourage people to play mind games with one another.

Harlem and Crown Heights, a suburb of Long Island, are the two predominant settings in the story. They are two diametrically contrasting worlds. Killens, rather conspicuous in his attack on middle-class black bourgeoisie, implements his unique style of writing to somehow amuse the reader yet stimulate his thinking.

Killens' style is not typical of any traditional novel that I've ever read. He ignores white usage of the English language along with white writing technique. His non-novel, novel, becomes an "Afro-Americanese" depiction of a prevalent black experience. His dialogue and narration represents this new mode of writing, deviating from white fiction, exploring black nuances and idioms. From his opening words to his closing remarks, Killens's story swings and flows majestically with a rhythm all its own.

One of the two principal motifs focuses on Yoruba Lovejoy, a young black girl, making an important transition in her life. She is experiencing development into a young lady ready to fulfill her role as a woman, although somewhat reluctantly. But with the gentle understanding she receives from her captain, Ben Ali Lamumba, she not only

matures physically but also undergoes a metamorphosis into her real blackness.

Because Yoruba loves her mother as a daughter must, she relents to her mother's petty whims. (She hates to see her mother cry.) Yoruba consents to participate in the upcoming Cotillion Ball sponsored by the benevolent Femmes Fatales, an isolated, light-skinned, status seeking woman's club. Only by a missionistic duty do they allow naive "culturally deprived" black, slow-blooming beauties from Harlem to participate in their debutant farse.

Killens makes the reader aware of the facade that surrounds the social world of the black "elite," like an opaque bubble enclosure. *The Cotillion* is garnished with episodes of a young, fresh love, hilarious, facetious comedy and a strong plea for black self-determination. The second main theme is centered upon exposing white society. Killens succeeds in exposing whites' societal airiness as well as blacks' societal imitateness.

Killens' story is a very satirical one in which he continually ridicules the black female social climbers and name droppers. People, like the Pattersons, Downjohns, Jeffersons and Brassworks, are characterized as super-shallow people. They never extend their minds past social events, tea parties and bridge.

The black "elite," as Killens depicts them, are frivolous old ladies "hung up" in white middle class standards. The whole idea of being cultured, to them, is to have money, buy extravagantly, entertain, travel, exhibit the finest, most expensive art and shelves full of classics. (Even if they cannot really appreciate them, it sure gives a fine appearance.)

The Cotillion comes to a grand finale among the symbolic cotton patches. For the theme of the Grand Cotillion, the ladies decided upon a southern plantation motif. Little did they know that there would be an uprising genteel plantation. It came to pass that on that memorable night, Yoruba and her mother, yes Lady Daphne, became emancipated. They experienced a personal freedom...a heavy mind release...a removal of the blinders. Yoruba obtains full possession of her soul, in exchange for her rebellion against false materialism.

Yoruba acts as she feels she must. Instead of making her debut in a white gown and silken hair, Yoruba flaunts her African robes and hair style as a proud recognition of her heritage. At this moment in her life she has truly become a woman. Even Daphne comes to realize her most important alliance; that being her black daughter and black husband as a proud mother and wife.

Killens leaves us with a sense of victory experienced by Yoruba and her loved ones. But I think that Killens does not expect the reader to immediately repel all that is white oriented. No. Killens is too much of a realist to allow himself this type of self indulgence. I do feel that he closes his story with a ray of hope that black people will realize their roles in American society and be instrumental in the determination of their own future.

Africa



Is At

Portugal was the first European country to invade Africa and establish colonies. It still claims to own the Territories of Angola, Mozambique and Guinea and the Cape Verde Islands.

From the earliest days of the slave trade to the modern days of heavy taxes and forced labor in mines and plantations, the Portuguese presence in Africa has meant nothing more to Black people than suffering, poverty and brutal repression. Africans have consistently resisted this oppression and now the nationalist liberation movements are finally turning the tide of the battle. As they become increasingly successful, Portuguese fear and repression intensifies.

The Wiriyamu Massacre

One example of this is the recently revealed massacre of more than 400 people (the

Boston Massacre left 4 dead) in the village of Wiriyamu in Mozambique last December, only a month before the assassination of Amílcar Cabral in Guinea.

The atrocities committed by the Portuguese forces in Wiriyamu (and nearby Chawolu) included the slitting open of pregnant women's bellies, letting their unborn children drop to the ground in blood convulsions, and football games played by the soldiers with the heads of decapitated Africans.

These horrors are documented but how many more massacres are yet unknown? The liberation fighters have repeatedly stated that this is the regular practice.

War

The U.S.A. and Portugal

Portugal is the weakest, poorest and most backward nation in Europe. It could hardly afford to wage three colonial wars in Africa (and the U.S. misadventure in Vietnam gives some idea of the cost) without outside help.

The U.S. government (Nixon) has promised Portugal \$436 million in aid while cutting back on programs benefitting Black people in the U.S. The government also finds drought threatens millions with starvation and death. (Ed. note: see BLACK GOLD: Vol. II, No. I, pg. 3).

Portugal receives weapons and military assistance from NATO, of which the U.S. is a member. Portuguese army officers have been trained in the U.S. (at Fort Bragg, N.C. and in California) and U.S. Special Forces ("Green Berets") have been sent to Africa as "advisors". (Sound familiar?)



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Andorinha, Marie Elisabeth

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Season, King Oscar, Gift of Sea, Vita Anchovies

Boycott Portuguese Tomato Paste

Goya tomato paste, Progresso tomato paste, Foodtown brand

Boycott Portuguese Wines

Wines account for a very large portion of the profits made by Portugal from exports to the U.S.:

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Including cork wall panels, wooden buttons, fabrics, etc.

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cameras, film, sunglasses — The Polaroid Corp. provides Nazi-style racist governments throughout the world — including South Africa and the U.S. — with their most valuable tools for population control.

Boycott Gulf!

Gulf Oil Co.'s investment in Angola means not only the rip off of valuable African resources but also much-needed revenue for the Portuguese to finance the murder of African people. Gulf single-handedly saved Portugal from losing the strategic Cabinda Province of Angola.

Boycott "Freeze-Dried" Coffee

All brands of "freeze-dried" coffee marketed in the U.S. (Maxim, Taster's Choice, etc.) are made with coffee beans from Angola.

Coffee, more than any other product is the life-blood of the Portuguese profiteers in Angola who grow fat and rich off the forced labor of Africans.

Brothers and sisters work at backbreaking labor from sunup to sundown on huge coffee plantations under the threat of imprisonment at hard labor or even death. The heads of decapitated Africans are often displayed as an example to others.

A recent coffee boycott in Holland (formerly a large consumer of Angolan coffee) has succeeded in stopping the import of coffee into that country. This makes coffee exports to the U.S. extremely important to the Portuguese growers in Angola.

for further information:

Southern Africa Information Group

Box 4443-E

Ottawa, (613) 232-2313

Angola is a small colony on the west coast of Africa. Angola is a repressed colony of Portugal, much the same as the United States was a colony of England in 1776. Since 1961, Angola has been fighting for her independence from Portugal, the world's last remaining colonial power.

Angola's right to freedom is supported by the United Nations as well as some portions of the United States. This war is a costly war in terms of Angolan lives. Thousands of Angolans have died in their fight for freedom and over 500,000 have been forced to become refugees.

The war is expensive in terms of dollars, also. Portugal's annual military budget is approximately 50% of her total budget. The Portuguese government currently has 150,000 troops in Africa. The Gulf Oil Corporation financially supports this Portuguese war through its annual payment of \$20,000,000 for oil rights in Angola.

If you buy Gulf petroleum products you contribute to the financial support of this war against freedom.

For further information write to:

Gulf Boycott Coalition
Box 123
D.V. Station
Dayton, Ohio 45406

Due to BLACK GOLD's growing concern toward the exploitation of Angolan labor and lives, the following recommended book list will consist solely of informative literature dealing with that current crisis.

1. "Gulf Oil: Portuguese Ally in Angola"; Corporate Information Center; 475 Riverside Drive; NYC; 10027; (212) 870-2295; 30 pages; 60¢.
2. "Allies in Empire: The U.S. and Portugal"; American Committee on Africa; 164 Madison Ave.; NYC, 10016; (212) 532-3700; 40 pages; 50¢.
3. "Background Information Re Gulf and the Ohio Conference" - Ohio Conf. - UCC; 41 Croswell Rd.; Columbus, Ohio; 43214; (614) 276-3141; 45 pgs.; \$1.
4. "Southern Africa Task Force Proxy Statement on Gulf," S Africa Task Force, United Presbyterian Church; 110 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002; (212) 54543-1126; 6 pages free.
5. "Why We Protest Gulf's Investment in Angola," American Committee on Africa; (see above), free.
6. "Gulf Position Paper," Gulf Oil Corporation; Pittsburgh, Pa.; 15230.
7. "Gulf Oil: A Study in Exploitation," Committee of Returnee Volunteers; (write to American Committee on Africa).
8. "Repression in Southern Africa; An indictment of Harvard University," Pan-African Liberation Committee; P.O. Box 514; Brookline Village, Mass.; 02147; 15 pages; 25¢.

Is U.R.I. Accepting

It's Responsibilities?

Ever since the formal or political birth of this country, education has been identified as one of the primary requirements of its continued growth and economic survival. It soon became apparent however that a high school education was not enough and the Universities in America became a permanent addition to one of the fastest growing economies of that time. Perhaps the reader may wonder why economics has been referred to here, but one does not have to be a student in history to

Is it wrong to have an all white and all black university? An interesting question, but it loses its academic appeal when one considers the social aspects of this system. It was decided some years ago to remove the physical signs which served to divide the country by color and descent, yet we see that in violation of this decree the institutions of higher learning have maintained their old ways by keeping their admissions procedures much the same as they were during the above mentioned period.



recall that the backbone of the American economy during the 17th, 18th, and some of the 19th centuries was the worker of African descent, commonly known as the slave. Maybe the fact that the slave or Negro occupied the lowest rung of the social ladder, or because of his darker color, or both of the above is the reason behind the national mass neglect of the black citizen in the higher educational structure of this country.

It is a known fact that in order to share in the vast pool of knowledge that is administered at Universities, the black American had to set up his own black universities, which were and still are the major sources of black college graduates. To continue the history of blacks in higher education, we see that it was not until 1826, that the first black student graduated from a white university. Even more interesting is the fact that it was not until one hundred years later that the first white university hired a black professor, at the University of Chicago in 1941. To put things in a better perspective, it must be noted that black college graduates, from black colleges, were available prior to 1825, so there was a supply, even though the demand is questionable.

It might be an educational experience to divert a bit here and to examine the white and black universities as separate entities.

There is little doubt in anyone's mind that the black citizen cannot be avoided, history has proven this and it is also evident that it is dangerous to ignore him. It therefore seems logical that one of the best courses of action is to systematically and wholeheartedly include him in the social structure, at all levels. One of the best places to effect this is in the nation's institutions of higher learning.

More and more students are now going on to college, their final step before emergence into the big, wide, impersonal world of self-sufficiency. It seems appropriate therefore that some sort of intercourse and communication be effected in college both the student and faculty/staff levels.

One of the major problems encountered by new graduates today is a confrontation with someone of a different cultural, social and educational background, and of course a different color. The typical student who encounters this problem is one who has been steered away from blacks all of his or her natural life, and suddenly they discover that blacks on TV are quite different from blacks on the street or in the office, for that matter.

To bring the above arguments home, we may consider some statistics on the University of Rhode Island. Prior to 1968, there was no positive action

made to recruit black students here at the State institution. The University, like most white universities, did not see the need to make any effort to integrate its student body, and hence its faculty and staff positions.

Today, there are only 93 black undergraduates out of a total of 8,000 students. The graduate student statistics are even worse.

The above figures demonstrate the fact that the University of Rhode Island is still unprepared to venture beyond its policy of token desegregation. In a country with a black population of 12% there is no logical explanation why a state university should have a population of about 1% minority — this combines students, faculty and staff.

respectable citizens. It is also necessary to have integration in the classroom, not only on a student level, but on a student-faculty level.

This dispels the age-old teachings and beliefs that black people are suited for menial jobs only. If people are to be surprised, this is the place to do it.

A university cannot exist without its supporting staff. This unheralded position therefore should not be overlooked, if the University of Rhode Island is to be integrated, it must be done on all levels.

The atmosphere of co-existence must extend beyond the classroom and into the offices, fields and all other areas of the university proper. It is only when these things are accomplished and the real intentions of the university become apparent, will the purpose and goal of a state or tax funded organization be realized. For the peace and harmony of our future generations there is no other way.

The following is a report submitted to the URI Ad Hoc Committee on Affirmative Action and Minority Affairs.

This committee was formed to encourage the admittance, recruitment, and employment of minority staff, faculty, and staff. Also, it encourages the University to support a new (and necessary) administrative position: Coordinator of Minority Affairs.

This committee is comprised of concerned URI administrative and departmental personnel.

93 black undergraduates...8,000 white undergraduates

Most of these blacks are recruited through the Talent Development program, which signifies that there is still nothing being done about accepting blacks through the usual channels.

To turn our attention to faculty and staff, we see that there are 61 American minority staff members. Taken as a percentage, only about 3% of a total staff of 2,200 are American minorities (Black and Indian). For the faculty, only 6 or less than 1% of a total of 800 faculty are American minority members. In addition to this, there are 9 foreign and off-campus faculty and staff, including 4 assistantships. This gives a total of 76 minority faculty and staff out of a total of 3,000 employees, or 2-and-one-half percent when taken as a percentage.

It is time for the University to come from behind its shield of inadequate and feeble excuses and for it to accept its responsibilities as an instrument of social change, and individual upliftment.

This goal can be accomplished by first deciding on some long-term university policies regarding racial mix. Then an all out effort should be made to bring about or effect the changes that these policies will evidently require. The university has to realize that by having a larger black population that it is accomplishing two major purposes.

The first of which is to teach the college community how to cope with and what to expect of society as it exists in the outside world. This is in effect, an effort to put any prejudice that is held in the college community to the test, and of all the places in the

61 American minority staff member...2,139 white staff members

Further examination of the statistics show that less than 12 of this total are in the \$10,000 or above salary bracket, and just about the same number come into direct contact with students in a supervisory or teaching role. With these few minority supervisors and teachers available only a limited number of students come into contact with them. The opportunity to disprove some of the racist attitudes and prejudices taught to some students is therefore lost, and again another chance to find out the truth is bypassed.

world to attack such problems, this is the best one — the university. The second purpose is that of fulfilling its task as an institution of higher learning, bettering the lot of all people and the society as a whole.

Needless to say, an increased black student population should warrant an increase in black faculty and staff. It is necessary to demonstrate to these students that black professorships are indeed realistic, that high goals and aspirations is not an unnatural thing, and that they too can someday take their place in society as responsible and

less than 1% of the total 800 URI white faculty are American minority members.

Support Black Gold



by Foxwell

Sunbeams peep through
the cracks in the blinds
Day whispers:

Hey!

Hey!
Get up!
(You old phony you)
Your pillow's wet your pillows wet
yourpillows wet
The buzzer screeeams:
Hey SLY!
(or is That you?)
Time to get up
and jump in your
BAAAG!
your Bag?
your paLASTIC Bag
your Palastic BAG!

(aw GIT It. SLY!)

So smooth on your make-up

(aw GIT IT. SLY!)

And Smooth in your heart

(aw GIT IT SLY!)

and jump in your Bad, Bad rags

(aw GIT IT SLY!)

hey
you know what my mirror tells me?
O! Sly is bad for Days Babee
(your pillows wet)

(aw GIT IT: SLY!)

So out of the bedroom

(aw GIT IT SLY!)

Slides big bad Sly

(aw GIT IT SLY!)

Diggin Day's hard, cold white light

(aw GIT IT SLY!)

If you ain't widit

(aw GIT IT SLY!)

Don't mess with Sly

(aw GIT IT SLY!)

Cause we gon Deal

(aw GIT IT SLY!)

You know it's true

(aw GIT IT SLY!)

If you get in the way

(aw GIT IT SLY!)

We'll deal with you

(aw GIT IT SLY!)

Cause we got something

(aw GIT IT SLY!)

That we gon do

aw GIT IT SLY!

aw GIT IT SLY!

aw GIT IT SLY!

Day whispers:

I see you inside your plastic baaag.

black expression/

black thought...

The Black man has contributed
far more to the society of the world than
anyone wants to realize. Yet it is through his
blood that the white races hope to cleanse themselves
of the evil that possesses them and will eventually destroy
them

SATAN

poem for kevin A

sunshine eyes
brown pooled

ever angel —
Longer devil
beer belly surrounded by
southern style cut-off shorts
from under which dives two
legs elaborately scarred
in the Battle of gladstone

Gap-toothed grin
displaying a somewhat
yellow badge of courage
insolence in full
compassion on credit
asset Love.

by pitts 5/14/73

The white man has gone
through the utmost deliberations
to make the black believe in white rather
than the color of his own skin. White is good;
Black is bad. A child is born, a black child is born,
and the first thing he sees after the life motivating, yet perpetual
slap is...?

SATAN

"the game" by valerie j. southern

"the game"
it was half time and i was exhausted...watching glistening black warriors streak up/down up/down across/up back/up back/down back...

yes and white faces were reddened with the fervor of 'the game.'

and i was tossed in the midst of throttled screams of triumph/despair/of hate/of what?

the arena (an appropriate appraisal of that particular sphere of understanding) was brimmed with white cream - inside were four black grains of manhood: pawns of a precariously paraphrased "spectator sport" ... yes.

it was half time and "we" (cough) were ahead by 1 extra toss of the ball..."we"...ha!

after the white-clad, white-glad Rammettes righteously rammed their purity into the stands-'the game' began again

and what a game it was...
black warriors: grab/fight/twist/toss —fall
anguish/strut/swing/swear/tear/and let it roll again yes, and white faces were reddened with the fervor of 'the game.'

two points toward victory
i could see the lead man (the coach?) 'affectionately' hug one weary warrior and whisper wisdom into his black ear a slap on his black behind and...streak

back out to the 'field' to relay the announcement of a new strategy...

fight Black warriors dig deep and let your conscience be your guide.

(the stand were salted
but in the far left
indiscreetly hidden

in the farrest corner was another
sect of black saints each with a different battle to win)

four points toward victory
and yes, - white faces were reddened with the fervor of the game
'the game'

streak fumble/distorted grimace of gratitude/catch it gracefully
be proud now

the arena erupts saluting its silohetts

and the frenzy becoms frantic

and reddened eyes follow

with deadly precision

the pattern

chiseled

by black feet...

the dance designed with black rythm

and 'round the arena one more time, one more time..

a second ticks

and

time is out and

"we" (ha!) won ...

'the game' is over and

i'm exhausted

i begin to file out as white engulfs what is left

of the triumphant moment.

"those niggers sure as hell played

a game tonite"...i heard as i fought my

way through the whiteness

"that black boy sure can carry that ball"

i heard that echo as i felt suddenly engulfed

by white cream (drowning)

"help!" i cried when i saw far away another lost, tossed black soul fighting to be freed.

"that black boy what's his name? he's damned fast!"

why can't they remember his name, I wondered, as i push/twist/grip/curse/back-forth/down/up ..

an elbow touches my throat as i am twisted unmercifully

i
can't
breath
the game is over
let
me
out....please! Suddenly -
somewhere a second ticks
it's over...
the cool, mistly air fills
my pained pores
an eerie light lingers outside
the great doors of the arena.
reddened faces suddenly lose their color...'the game' is over...

i
am
alone
tiptoeing silently back to my room across the small patch of green grass.
(my head is limp)

black voices ring over my shoulder
"val, how'd you like the game?" (glee tinging every heart-felt syllable)

i
linger
and try to be kind
because mingled with confused emotions
is the taste of price and vic/to/ry
i lift my head and smile and shutter (from the coldness of the and say with precious dignity:
"oh...it was just a game"

i turn eager to go on my way: "just a game"
my voice audible only to my inner self: "a game"
ha!

III.

a little black baby spider,
spinning wider and wider,
just starting her first web:
a male-killing social deb.

Thomas Nance

Seems like we don't
listen anymore

seems like we don't listen anymore

when i heard her talk it was like a strain
on my ears — yes — voice sweet, soft and
sincere. she lived a life free and easy at
one time, with a thundering sound of magnificance
but not now.

you see things have changed for her —
she doesn't even trust her own image but
rather rely upon someone else to lead her
the way.

yeah, there you go laughing — asking what
kind of bullshit woman is this, she must be
out of her mind or else high off
something — but i tell you she is real.

hearing her talk is almost like seeing the
end of a life — perhaps her own but
a time was when we could have saved
her and many like her.

she tells you of those turbulent days gone by — racing, running,
always laughing days
gone by and a faint smile touches her
lips, her eyes and your heart but then
she tells you of her change.

so many questions she has had to ask
so many answers she desperately needed but
nobody was there to hear her —
damn it
but nobody was there to hear her.

see her now, small
no not small but frail — fragile and ready
to break down, half dead
because there was no — damned — body
to hear her

Well i heard her the other night, talking
in her sleep, she was sobbing and talking
about death. i went to her side to comfort
her all i could

yes, Brothers, Sisters it seems we don't
listen anymore — no not even to each other

By the way, did you hear? it was in
the newspapers and all — Are you sure
you didn't hear? — that she died from
— an over dose—

or weren't you listening?

Vanessa Cooley

I.

The sun is going;

my autumn has arrived.

No life-blood flowing:

my life is so short-lived;

To Nature owing

spring and summer brief.

I will end knowing

I am the last green leaf

Thomas Nance

The Black Laborer and His Plight

page 8, Dec. 19, 1973

The purpose of this article is to show the background of the Negro as a laborer and to relate his attitude to his predicament.

by Linda A. Hazel

A review of the American Black in the role of worker has yielded much fascinating data as has his treatment by the labor unions. Looking back on the Black and his condition as he entered his early years of freedom, one cannot but empathize with their situation.

In the beginning the freedman was denied equal rights as a citizen on the grounds that he was educationally and culturally not qualified for citizenship. The freedman was further denied his rights when told that he was unfit to become qualified for citizenship.

One must remember that during the latter part of the nineteenth century the American Black, although supposedly "free," was still being manipulated either by congress or by the presiding president. Hope was restored among the Negroes in this country during the post Civil War period and reconstruction. The atmosphere was one of concern and interest as to the economic uplifting of the American Blacks.

This interest in Black economic stability was motivated by the fact that the South itself could not afford this sudden release of millions of people into their economic structure. At this time, after her defeat in the Civil War and the physical and psychological destruction which accompanied this defeat, the South was in no position to have her economic structure further disturbed.

Although the South conceded freedom to the freedmen, as men she insisted that they work. The southern planters could seldom envision Blacks as having the right to refuse work. Therefore southern employers desired to force Blacks to work and for meager wages. This sort of confrontation between white employer and black employee led to a sheer disillusionment.

The Afro-American, a potentially valuable force in the labor market, was not being given full equality as a worker. This resulted in the birth of the general mistrust among Black workers toward their white employers, and to the labor movements in general.

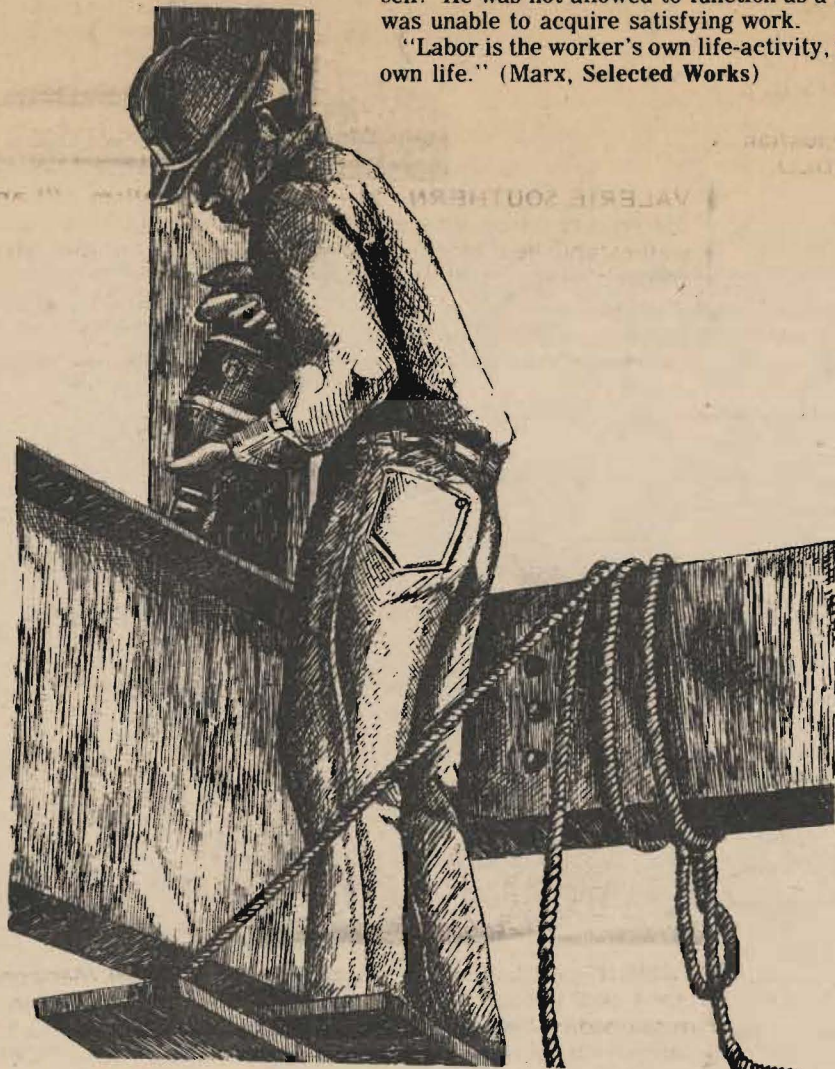
Many, many obstacles faced the American Black in his attempt to acquire equality as a worker. He was not skilled and needed training. The average Negro could not afford schooling or training because he had a family to support. Because of his need for money to survive, the Black was forced to accept jobs that required little skill and that provided few benefits. He found himself caught in a vicious cycle which was perpetrated by the existing oppressive white system.

The Black worker lived and worked in a system that afforded him few personal gains or satisfactions. After many years the Black worker looked around and found that for years he had been standing still. His progress as a functioning entity in regards to self-determination was not evident. He was still a product of the white environment.

Although freed from slavery he did not experience freedom of self. He was not allowed to function as a man simply because he was unable to acquire satisfying work.

"Labor is the worker's own life-activity, the manifestation of his own life." (Marx, Selected Works)

Support
BLACK
GOLD



1865-1943

(To be continued in the next issue)

The Black And Labor

This low and almost non-progressive state of the Black worker brings us to the period of the Great Depression. The depression brought hardships to white Americans. But to the Black, who suffered even in prosperous times, the depression presented him with insurmountable barriers to employment.

"Section 7a of the National Industrial Recovery Act provided that employees should have the right to organize and bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing without interference, restraint, or coercion of employers of labor." (Franklin, From Slavery To Freedom)

The purpose of the National Labor Board was to provide enforcement of this statute. Blacks as well as whites found it difficult to procure wage increases let alone keep their jobs. But unlike white laborers, black workers were not protected by section 7a of the National Recovery Act when it came to the issue of labor unions. The discriminatory policies of the major labor unions were still in effect, hampering the bargaining power of the Black worker. Without the support of a union, the Black laborer found the job competition overwhelming.

"The Wagner Act, passed while Franklin D. Roosevelt was in the White House in 1935, gave further strength to the National Labor Relations Board which replaced the previous NLB." (Franklin From Slavery To Freedom)

Its purpose was to set up clear-cut rules for collective bargaining. The board organized 22 regional boards which had the power to conduct industrial elections to determine which employees would bargain with their employers. The policies of the NLB gave the employees additional power in setting strikes and handling labor disputes.

"It was felt that by encouraging collective bargaining the government would enable the workers to wrest higher wages from management and that the resulting increase in consumer spending would benefit the entire economy." (Walters, Black Labor in America).

Even with this type of backing by a national agency, the American Black, for the most part, never benefited, solely because he was excluded from most unions.

The Black & American Labor Unions

The history of labor unions in America is a varied one. Negroes had been completely ignored by most unions. Their acceptance by a few organizations did not atone for their complete exclusion by a large percentage of organizations. Altogether in 1930, there were at least nineteen independent unions which excluded Blacks from membership. An additional ten unions admitted Blacks as members, but stipulated that they be only in segregated auxiliary locals.

While it is impossible to determine precisely the number of Black trade union members, the N.A.A.C.P. felt that it was "safe to say that there were in 1930 no more than 50,000 colored members of national unions," (Walters, Black Labor In America) and approximately half of this figure were members of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters.

There are numerous reasons why some unions favored Black members. None of these reasons involved honest sympathy for the Black cause. Many unions were in competition and therefore rivals of one another. If one union discriminated against Black workers, the opposing union would be very apt to reverse its policies and become somewhat racially liberal.

This tactic was implemented only to serve the individual union's needs. But even in that situation there was a certain amount of risk in alienating its predominantly white members.

During this period of collective bargaining during the 30's and the 40's, three major types of unions were functioning.

First, there were those unions which excluded Blacks by provisions in their ritual. Secondly there were those unions which excluded Blacks by provisions in their constitutions. These methods of discrimination were less overt than that practiced by the third type of union, which permitted Blacks to be members, but only with segregated auxiliary status.

The very limited number of trade unions that did permit Negroes to join gave them the privilege of paying dues, but their participation was limited to "Jim Crow" auxiliary bodies. This type of quasi membership left the Black no voice in the affairs of the union. They were not allowed to negotiate their own agreements and therefore found themselves powerless and constantly overlooked. This treatment further strengthened the Blacks workers mistrust in labor movements.

CLASS of 1974



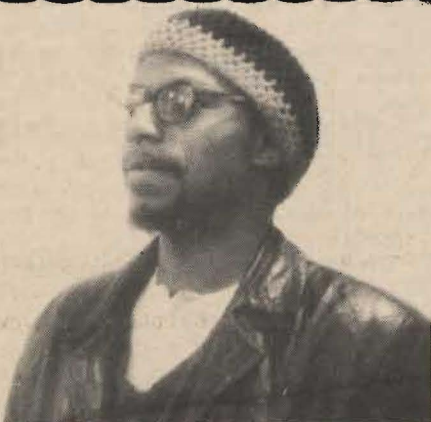
LINDA HAZEL - 26 - Major: Sociology. "I plan to relocate in the South, preferably in Atlanta, Georgia and attend graduate school in the area of Social Welfare." Ms. Hazel is scheduled to graduate in January, 1974.



BUTCHIE VARELLA - 21 - Major: Organizational Management and Industrial Relations. "Presently I am applying to graduate schools in the immediate New England area."

free

at



WILLIAM TUTT - 22 - Major: Organizational Management and Industrial Relations. "I am trying to leave myself open to two alternatives - graduate school or employment. It is going to take a lot of time to make a decision."



ALEXA GRANT - 21 - Major: English. "After graduation, I wish to pursue a career in the area of Black mass communications."

Graduation date for 25 Black University of Rhode Island students is fast approaching. What will they do with their education experiences and teachings? Where will they go? Will they continue their education?

BLACK GOLD, briefly, asked eight seniors these impossible questions. Jobs are scarce, graduate schools more expensive than ever before. Meeting criteria standards for jobs and schools have become more difficult.

It is early in the year, so understandably the answers given by the soon-to-be graduates are not concise. They are still searching and wary of unexpected opportunities that may appear.

However, to those readers who are curious as to where young, R.I. Black men and women are going, here is a quick look.

There will be a continuation in the next **BLACK GOLD**.



NORMAN GREEN - 23 - Major: Political Science. "I want to go to Law School and also to a graduate school. I would like a Masters in Community Planning."

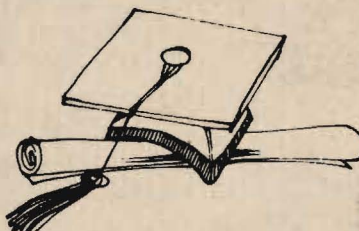


VALERIE SOUTHERN - 21 - Major: Journalism. "I am determined to become a features or editorial writer for a well-established black-oriented magazine. In the long-ranged future, I think it would be interesting to start a magazine of my own, that is of a totally different caliber than the current black magazines on the market today."

last



EVA GAMBLE - 21 - Major: Sociology. "I hope to work in an effective social service agency." Ms. Gamble would like to counsel as a profession. Also, she says, "I do not want employment in Rhode Island."



LAMONT WELLS - 22 - Major: Organizational Management and Industrial Relations. Mr. Wells will be commissioned in June, 1974. He will be ranked a second lieutenant in the United States Army. He plans to travel to Ft. Knotts in Kentucky and eventually be stationed in Europe.

photos by: Linda Hazel
Valerie J. Southern

Uhuru Sasa Briefs



UJIMA

Brothers and Sisters,

Second semester of last year, a group of the brothers and sisters here at Hampton formed a Black Student Union. We felt a strong need for us as Black students, even on a Black campus, to unite in order to deal with problems we as students face and to eventually become a vital, relevant part of the STRUGGLE in our Black communities. We also feel that a union of students aids in strengthening student government, (who we work in conjunction with).

B.S.U., S.G.A. and all of the organizations on campus are presently raising money for the West African Crisis, I'm sure that you know of the plight of our brothers and sisters in West Afrika. Although we realize that the struggle must begin at home, here on campus and then to our Black communities, we also feel a strong responsibility to our brothers across the water.

I'm writing you at this time to find out if you can give us any new different ways to raise money. We are also interested in establishing communication lines with Black organizations across the country. You may also be able to give us advice which will help us strengthen our organization.

UJIMA (collective work and responsibility) is the word. It is time for us as Black people to take on responsibility as a people and to work toward Black unity as a people. The plight of the BROTHERS and SISTERS in West Afrika is as much our responsibility as the plight of our people here. We look forward to hearing from you and hope that our communication will continue.

UMOJA
Yours in the STRUGGLE,
Latech
Chairman/BSU

The Harvard-Radcliffe Afro-American Cultural Center invites Uhuru Sasa members to KUUMBA singers. In concert, on Sunday, Dec. 16 at 8 p.m. Location: Paine Hall (Music Building) at Harvard University. Costs: \$2.00 Adults; \$1.00 Children. Spirituals, gospel, contemporary poetry. For further info: 492-5884.

Unlike last year, members of Uhuru Sasa have been working on the makings of the 1974 Black Cultural weekend, since the beginning of the semester. Although much has been accomplished there is much more work ahead. The BLACK GOLD along with Uhuru Sas is asking that anyone, interested in making the 1974 Cultural Weekend a success, please contact Ida Catlin or Joseph Nicolaus (co-chairpersons for Black Cultural weekend.)

Additional help is also needed with the food fest and the advertising aspects of the weekend. Those wishing to render services in these areas, please contact Vera Carr/Memorial Union.

HOLIDAYS



The members of the BLACK GOLD staff wish all of you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

The BLACK GOLD newspaper will return next year (1974) hopefully with the support of our reading public.

Once again, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.



Soul Chart

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. THE LOVE I LOST | Harold Melvin & Blue Notes |
| 2. KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING | Roshell Anderson |
| 3. WANNA KNOW YOUR NAME | Intruders |
| 4. IF YOU'RE READY | Staple Singers |
| 5. STONED TO BONE | James Brown |
| 6. ME & BABY BROTHER | War |
| 7. LIVIN' FOR THE CITY | Stevie Wonder |
| 8. NEVER GIVE YA UP | Barry White |
| 9. SUPER ROD | Crown Heights |
| 10. I FOUND SUNSHINE | Chi-Lites |
| 11. RIVER | Joe Simon |
| 12. BEST YEARS OF MY LIFE | General Crook |
| 13. SHOW & TELL | Al Wilson |
| 14. COME TO THIS | Marvin Gaye |
| 15. CHEAPER TO KEEP HER | Jonny Taylor |
| 16. LIVIN' FOR YOU | Al Green |

SUBSCRIBE TO BLACK GOLD TODAY!!

Dec. 19, 1973, page 11

"Never before since the inception of this Republic has our nation experienced the conditions it has been through," said Black 1972 presidential candidate, Rep. Shirley Chisholm.

Chisholm, speaking to about 500 Brown University students, in Sayles Hall on Dec. 3, insisted that America is "in a political mess."

"This country finds itself in the same conditions Rome went through before Rome fell," she said.

In an hour talk, Chisholm discussed the "lack of concern" by the present Nixon administration to the nation's problems.

"The cost of living has risen — doubled since the previous administration," said Chisholm.

Nixon's employment policies has caused the largest unemployment record since the depression era, said Chisholm. "From three and one-half to seven percent of the labor force are now unemployed."

"The bungling has virtually halted this country's economic growth," she said.

The cause of such things as increased crime, growing welfare rolls, inflation, and unemployment is due to what the New York Republican called "courting the favors of big businesses."

Nixon not to blame

"Rather than representing the people," President Nixon, she claims, has an a moral pre-occupation of representing the powerful U.S. gasoline and petroleum corporations.

"This arrogant power (big businesses)," she said, "has been permitted, for too long, to control Washington."

However, added Chisholm, Americans cannot entirely blame Nixon and Agnew for these national inter-crisises.

Americans never have done their homework politically," she said.

She described the voting habits of Americans and phrased them: "pack psychology" habits. Many voters follow a certain candidate simply because their peers do. They do not want to be left out, claims Chisholm.

Voters "sit before a boob tube" and candidly watch platforms and candidates and then vote for the candidate that "the pack" most accepts.

Rep. S. Chisholm at Brown University

Chisholm: "Lord, How Long"

"Then we find ourselves in a mess," she said.

"We are more comfortable moving together like blind sheep, so don't blame Spiro T. Agnew or Richard M. Nixon."

The 49 year-old New York politician accused American voters of having "no courage, no guts, no stamina."

~~~~~



"This country finds itself in the same conditions Rome went through before Rome fell."

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Watergate: a blessing in disguise

Because of the Watergate affair, "everywhere everyone is gloomy and sad," said Chisholm. But though "feelings of frustration exist," she claimed, "Watergate is a blessing in disguise."

"If we didn't have Watergate where would we have been two years from now if the revelation didn't hit us?"

The missing Watergate-related tapes and their implications, said Chisholm should show the American people "anything goes ... as long as that man (President Nixon) is kept in his position."

let's not kid ourselves

Chisholm also warned the students about the recent revenue-sharing plan implemented by the Nixon administration. This plan called for federal monies to be allocated to city governments to be used for community poor and disadvantaged.

"Monies to cities are going to tax cuts favorable to middle-class groups," warned Chisholm.

"Let's not kid ourselves," she said, "mayors are using these monies toward administrative services."

The revenue-sharing plan, added Chisholm, "is a good way to help those who are not so badly off ... not to help the poor." (Ed's Note: See Black Gold, Vol. I No. 7)



"Americans never have done their homework politically"

-by Valerie Southern

"Poor folks are getting the crumbs that are swept off the table."

"We have been sleeping," continued Chisholm. But she believes that when a national problem seems overwhelming, it should be seen "as a troublesome detour to the main highway you are traveling for freedom."

Our only hope, concluded the speaker, is to "try to stick together for our mutual survival."

"We've got a lot of housecleaning to do inside our country," she said.

America, suggested Chisholm, should remember that though it is a melting pot of all kinds of people, it is still one nation which should be indivisible.

"Though we (and our ancestors) came here in different boats ... at this point in time we are all in the same boat together," she concluded.

Photos by: Valerie J. Southern

\$23,000 Campaign Monies Investigation

Rep. Chisholm was asked about the recent federal investigation concerning \$23,000 of her 1972 presidential campaign monies.

"This is the sixth time they have tried to destroy me," she said.

"Put me before the American public," she said daringly, "and if I fall before the American public ... I fall flat on my face."

"I never have and never shall" was her final reply to the question of her pocketing the monies meant for campaigning.

When asked if she would seek re-election as representative, Chisholm answered, "I have made my contribution to this country ... I don't want to become a career politician ... after 1976, I will probably be out of this business."

Black Historical Events

Dec. 1 Rosa Parks arrested for refusing to sit in Jim Crow section of bus in Montgomery, Ala. Bus boycott by blacks begins four days later. 1959.

Dec. 2 John Brown abolitionist, leader of raid on Harper Ferry, is hanged. 1859.

Dec. 3 Joshua R. Giddings of Ohio, first abolitionist elected to Congress. 1838. Frederick Douglas begins publishing his North Star newspaper at Rochester, N.Y. 1847.

Dec. 4 American Anti-Slavery Society founded at Philadelphia, 1833.

Dec. 5 Phyllis Wheatley, poet born in Africa and bought to Boston as a slave, died. 1784.

Dec. 6 First National Negro Labor Convention meets in Washington and organizes Colored National Labor Union. 1869.

Dec. 7 Whites riot against Black in Vicksburg, Miss. killing thirty-five. 1874.

Dec. 15 Fats Waller, jazz pianist and composer dies. 1943. Two brigades of Black troops helped defeat one of the best Confederate armies in the Battle of Nashville. 1864.

Dec. 10 Massachusetts Bay Colony adopts Body of Liberties: a law code that recognizes slavery. 1641.

Dec. 12 Joseph J. Rainey of South Carolina is first black to be sworn into U.S. House of Representatives. 1870. Supreme Court rules that states must provide equal accommodations for all law students. 1938.

of the Month

Dec. 17 In 1960: 18,871,831 Blacks in U.S. 10.5 percent of population.

Dec. 18 Thirteenth Amendment, abolishing slavery in U.S. goes into effect. 1865.

Dec. 20 Of the 22 Blacks elected to Congress in Reconstruction era, 13 were born slaves and 9 born free.

Dec. 21 David Ruggies, a black New Yorker, began editing the quarterly magazine, Mirror of Liberty, in 1838. Robert S. Duncan, Landscape painter, dies. 1872.

Dec. 22 In 1968 Fortune reported that Black Americans represented a market of \$30 billion a year before taxes.

Dec. 24 There are 113 pre-dominantly Black colleges and universities in the U.S.

Dec. 25 Two Blacks, Prince Whipple and Oliver Cromwell, are with Washington's troops crossing Delaware on Christmas Day to attack Hessians at Trenton. 1776.

Dec. 26 William and Ellen Craft make sensational escape from slavery in Georgia with her impersonating a slave holder and him acting as her servant.

Dec. 28 S.H. Archer, President of Morehouse College, Atlanta, Ga., born in Peterburg, Va. 1870.

Dec. 29 A new pattern for demonstrations was set when CORE conducted sit-ins at a Chicago restaurant in 1953.

Dec. 30 Mamie Smith made the first authentic blues recording ("Crazy Blues") in 1920.

**Support
Black Gold**

BLACK GOLD needs your support....we have no money.
Briefly, I will explain. The URI Student Senate (financers of all past issues of B.G.) does not feel BLACK GOLD should be funded any longer by University monies.
They feel BLACK GOLD is a black community newspaper-not a student newspaper.
In a very strict sense, their rationale is a correct and proper one. The black community, if truly concerned with the future of our legitimate enterprise, should be financially and spiritually receptive.
However, they (the Student Senate) fails to realize that our publication is an educational, cultural, and social tool which can contribute to educational horizons of the many naive white students not yet aware of Black attitudes and thoughts.
With URI's dismally low minority enrollment statistics and its tragically limited minority-oriented academia it is in no position to reject the small voice BLACK GOLD wishes to strengthen.
On the other hand-what about the R.I. black community? Where is its support and interest?
We (the BLACK GOLD staff) have waited patiently. Time is running out. This is not to say that no one has given moral and representative support...there have been many brothers/sisters who have lit the flame of unity and held it high.
But where are the others? I refuse to believe blackness sleeps. The continuous surge and magnitude of our ancestry is proof of our dynamism and strength. We (BLACK GOLD) need that strength NOW.
To those who find truth, to those who find identification, to those who find possibilities/potential, and to those who find BLACK GOLD supporting a need that white negligence cannot fulfill-is it not logical, then, to support, contribute and (please) give?
BLACK GOLD hangs dangerously amidst the intangible cloud of death...but...but "why should it," we cry.
Perhaps, this question will be answered if we find (again) that there is no new subscriber, there is no letters supporting ideas or giving new ones, there is no one who feels it is important enough to support our dying cause.
If this be the case, then...well...we submit a proper and dignified: "good-by."

valerie j. southern
and
the editorial staff

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Black Gold**

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